**Neuroscience Faculty Advisory Committee**

**IQ Bldg., Room 3000**

**March 20, 2020**

**Attendance**: Marc Breedlove, Jim Galligan, Gina Leinninger, Galit Pelled, Michelle Mazei-Robison, Wilmarie Morales-Soto (student rep), and Greg Swain.

**Old Business**

1. Action Item: Approve FAC minutes from February 21, 2020

* Greg had a correction: the Fulbright scholarship is two years, instead of three.
* Jim asked if the corrections are made, does the committee approve these minutes?
* Motion to Approve: Michelle
* Second: Gina Leinninger
* Motion passes

**New Business**

1. Discussion Item: Graduate Program Updates – Greg Swain
   * Greg had a few agenda items to share with the committee from the Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC):
2. **Eleven offers extended, and four offers accepted**

* Four students have accepted: Brooke Devries, Abby Barrett, Kaitlyn Gordon, and Cristina Rivera-Quiles. Brooke has a CNS fellowship, Kaitlyn has a University Enrichment Fellowship (UEF), and Cristina has a University Diversity Fellowship (UDF). Tana Pottorf and Karina Matos have declined our offer.
* Greg reported that we still have six offers pending. An offer was extended to Xiang (Jason) Liu this week. Greg has been in correspondence with the remaining offers.

1. **Jim and Greg interviewed Ahmed Atwa on Friday, March 6. He is a Fulbright Master’s student from Egypt**

* Jim and Greg were both impressed with his communication skills, scholastic accomplishments, and research goals. GAC was also very impressed with his application. Greg stated Ahmed would be extended an offer, but this is contingent upon receiving his Fulbright scholarship. Greg believes Ahmed will accept our offer if all goes as planned.

1. **The Graduate School has issued new mentoring guidelines**

* Greg stated the goal is to improve the quality of mentoring that faculty provide to students, but also to educate students on what appropriate mentor/mentee relationships look like.
* Greg added that a mentoring workshop held by Melissa McDaniel’s on Tuesday, May 5 from 9am–12pm. This workshop is for both student and faculty. A location has yet to be decided.
* Greg also shared a piece from The National Academy of Sciences; they have released a new article about mentoring within STEM, and some of the best practices. (<https://www.nap.edu/resource/25568/interactive/>)

1. **Written comprehensive exam schedule**

* Greg stated there are four students to take the comprehensive exams this year: Samantha Caico, Zac Fernandez, Luis Martinetti, and Hannah Rudolph. May 3-8 will be the controversy exam, May 10-15 will be the translational exam, and May 17-22 will be for deciding proposal topics. The week following will be for any remediation that is necessary.

1. **Work continues on establishing a 3+2 MS/BS program with North Carolina Central University (NCCU)**

* Greg reported he has not had a lot of progress with them on this program. NCCU has undergone many administrative changes, so it has been a slow-going process.
* Greg plans to look at both NCCU’s curriculum in psychology along with our curriculum to see how they could merge to develop a 3+2 program. Greg would like to send this to NCCU as a proposal in hopes to start the discussion. Though the process has been slow, Greg believes this is a worthwhile program to pursue.

1. **A reminder to all faculty and students to hold an annual guidance committee meeting**

* Greg added that all students and faculty must hold an annual guidance committee meeting. The form to be completed is on the Neuroscience Program website.

1. **Guidance from the Graduate School, VPRI and Office of Regulatory**

* Greg had sent around several items through e-mail regarding research assistance and work processes during the COVID-19 crisis.
* Jim asked about the 3+2 MS/BS program **(**item #5), and the proposal to the Graduate School. Jim inquired what kind of funding and dollar amounts we were looking at.
* Greg responded that commitments included $10,000 from the Graduate School (each year for three years), a commitment from Neuroscience and from Richard Swartz at the College. Greg said in total this was a $30,000 proposal.
* Jim asked what the shortcoming was, and if any feedback was offered?
* Greg responded that he received a statement that the mentoring activities were not described sufficiently. Greg disagreed with this comment, as he did try to outline these activities in the document. Greg stated he would like to pursue other avenues of funding, perhaps other than the Graduate School.
* Jim asked if it was possible to resubmit the application?
* Greg said that if we resubmitted the application, it would be for the following year. Greg said the deadline for resubmission will be sometime in November.

1. Discussion Item: Training Grant – Jim Galligan
   * Jim reported that there was an e-mail from the CNS Research Office requesting information for the training grant. Jim wanted to encourage the faculty on the list to respond to this e-mail in a timely matter. The deadline to submit this information is Wednesday, March 25.
   * Jim said it takes about an hour to gather this information. Jim stated that one portion in particular that takes a bit of time is information on previous trainees; including published works, and where they are now. Jim suggested that if faculty were on the previous application, they might still have a lot of this information saved in a file somewhere.
   * Greg asked how many years we need to go back?
   * Jim said everyone should read the instructions. Jim stated for a revised application, it is asked we go back 10 years.
   * Jim has been in contact with Doug Gage from the Vice President’s office. Jim has also been in contact with Keith Latham from Animal Sciences who received a T32 grant. Jim said there has been an effort in the Vice President’s office to try to streamline and simplify the process of training grants applications. Jim mentioned that Michigan State University has five T32 grants total, and this puts us near the bottom compared to other Big 10 universities. Jim said the Vice President’s office wants to improve these numbers. Jim said in order to achieve this, there needs to be mechanism that can help streamline the collection of the data. Jim said there is a great deal of data and information that goes into these applications, and collecting this data is the biggest challenge. There have been efforts to create a mechanism or database where this information can be download from. Jim plans to meet with them next week to discuss this issue, and see if a team can assemble to put this all together.
   * Jim also stated he plans to ask for matching funds from the Vice President’s office. Jim said these funds would supplement the number of slots the program receives from the training grant; Jim is planning to ask for six slots.
   * Jim explained this training grant is for “Undifferentiated Students”, and they are in their first or second year of training and in need of financial support. Jim said in the past, the training grant has funded new students for two years in the program. Jim stated if the program asks for six slots, the program can fund three students for two years. Jim said he plans to ask for additional slots to support another position (two more stipends). Jim said the idea is to support four students off the training grant for two years.
   * Marc said that in the 10 years he had his training grant, there was a deal that for every two slots received by a unit the Graduate Dean would give support for an additional slot. Marc suggested that though there is a new dean, there might be money for the program from the Graduate School. Marc added that Graduate School funding is helpful because it is given in a lump sum cash. Because the training grant support has very specific designations, Marc said it was handy to have the money from the Graduate School.
   * Jim responded that he had sent an e-mail to the Graduate Dean and Eric Hegg. Jim reported the process has changed where funding now comes from the Vice President’s office, and the Vice President’s office will go to the Graduate School or participating colleges to collect support. Jim said that appears to be their new system.
   * Greg added that Thomas **Jeitschko** in the Graduate School has a strong desire in doing all that is necessary to increase the number of T32 on campus.
   * Jim responded that Thomas would probably be the first person that the Vice President’s office will talk with. Jim said that Keith Latham is putting in a renewal of his training grant as well, so he will be going through the same process. Jim added that this is new territory, so we will have to see how it works.
2. No New Business
3. No Old Business

Action Item: Adjourn Meeting

* Motion to Approve: Gina Leinninger
* Second: Marc Breedlove
* Motion passes

Meeting adjourned: 10:56am

*Our next FAC meeting is Friday, April 17 at 10:30am*